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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/776,777	02/10/2004	Norman J. MacDonald III	10406-015003	3236

26161 7590 02/23/2007  
FISH & RICHARDSON PC  
P.O. BOX 1022  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022

EXAMINER
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HOGAN, JAMES SEAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3752

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/23/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/776,777

Applicant(s)

MACDONALD ET AL.

Examiner

James S. Hogan

Art Unit

3752

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 January 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 45-47 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 45-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 February 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Terminal Disclaimer***

The terminal disclaimer filed on January 4, 2007 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of U.S. Patent 6,691,790 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 46 and 48 recite the limitation "flexible conduit" in line 2 of each of the claims. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claim 45 and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,389,884 to Ault

Regarding claim 45, and 47, Ault discloses a housing (14) defining an internal volume within which a sprinkler head is received, the housing having an open face and an aperture (@ 15) through which a conduit (connecting to (12)) extends to connect to the sprinkler head and a removable cover (17) which covers the open face of the housing and has an opening configured to receive the sprinkler head.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 46 and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,389,884 to Ault.

The rejection of claims 45 and 47 above serves as the basis for the following. Ault does not teach an elbow joint and flexible conduit, however it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have employed elbow joints and flexible conduit since both entities are notoriously well known in the plumbing arts as viable piping solutions in the construction of sprinkler systems, and are widely available commercially to the general populace.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure is as follows:

U.S. Patent No. 2,534,066 to Rowley

U.S. Patent No. 5,097,906 to Polan

U.S. Patent No. 3,625,427 to Nadkarni et al

U.S. Patent No. 4,215,751 to Mears

U.S. Patent No. 3,393,746 to Hodnett

U.S. Patent No. 3,349,266 to Ault

U.S. Patent No. 4,014,388 to Anderson

U.S. Patent No. 6,840,329 to Kikuchi et al

U.S. Patent No. 6,484,809 to Elder

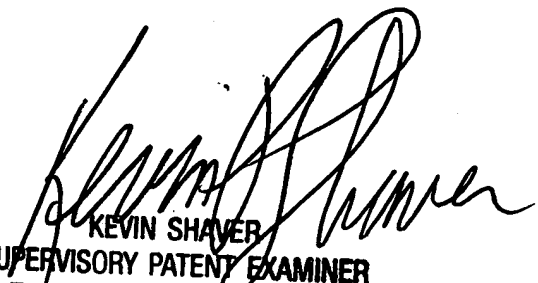
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James S. Hogan whose telephone number is (571) 272-4902. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 7:00a-4:00p EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin P. Shaver can be reached on (571) 272-4720. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3752

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JSH  
2/7/2007



KEVIN SHAVER  
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TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700